

# **The Landscape Explorers Student Field Journal**

## **Instruction for Use**

### **Putting Your Guide(s) Together**

We recommend that you store the Student Field Journal in a self-covering 9 1/2" x 11 1/2" three-ring binder with a 1" spine. The front and back covers should be slipped into the clear, plastic front and back sleeves of the binder. The map should be folded and tucked into the pocket of the binder. The remaining pages should be cut in half on the dotted lines. These pages should be 3-hole-punched where indicated, ordered by page number and placed into the guide.

### **Using this Curriculum**

*Landscape Explorers* is an active, interdisciplinary, place-based curriculum that introduces fourth and fifth grade students to the concept of landscape and heightens awareness of the relationship between landscape and people.

Each class participating in *Landscape Explorers* needs:

- A Teacher's Guide with background information and lesson plans to help teachers facilitate student learning activities.
- A Student Field Journal for each student. The Student Field Journal includes background information and activities that spark imagination, creativity, and self-confidence as students develop new skills and understanding.
- A Photopacket with nine 8 1/2" x 11" color photos of Boston-area landscapes that students use with "Picture This!," a cooperative learning activity to heighten visual acuity and hone investigative skills.

### **For More Information**

For more information on this curriculum or other programs at Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, please contact the site's Education Specialist at (617) 566-1689, x 204. Email: [liza\\_stearns@nps.gov](mailto:liza_stearns@nps.gov)



# Landscape Explorers

FIELD JOURNAL





## Landscape Explorers: Uncovering the Power of Place

My name:

.....

The date I began using this field journal:

.....

The date I visited the Arnold Arboretum:

.....

My landscape explorer role:

.....



# What's in Your Field Journal

What is Landscape?

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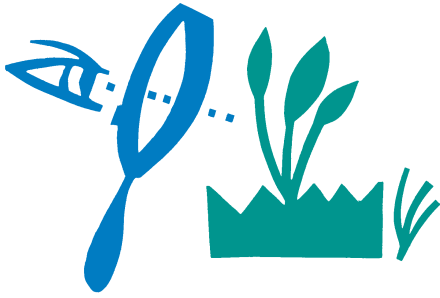
Imagine you are standing on a sidewalk in the middle of Boston. Buildings tower over you. Cars rush by. Someone pushes a hotdog cart your way. What do you hear? What do you smell? What do you see? How does this place make you feel?

Now, you are sitting next to a stream that runs through a city park. Trees rise up around you. Imagine that you hear birds and the sounds of a friend riding her bicycle nearby. How does this place make you feel?

Chances are, the two places make you feel very different. That is the power of landscape.

So what do we mean when we use the word “landscape?” A landscape is a view of the land. It is what we see when we stand in a particular place. To find a landscape, just go outside and look around. What you see before you is landscape. Schoolyards. Backyards. Vacant lots. Neighborhood parks. Landscapes are all around us.





Everyday landscapes affect the way we feel and the things we do. Landscapes can make us smile or feel grumpy. They can make us feel like being quiet or loud. While we are all

affected by landscapes, no two people experience a single landscape in the same way.

Just as landscapes affect people, people have the power to change landscapes. We decide how to use a piece of land. We can build a house on it, or create a neighborhood garden. We can pave the land to make a parking lot, or plant grass and trees to make a city park. How we use land is based on our needs and desires. The decisions we make affect the landscapes around us. The way we use land today will affect the look and feel of landscapes for years to come.







## Schoolyard Landscape Exploration

### ..... Finding a Landscape

Have you ever explored your schoolyard landscape? Become a landscape explorer and uncover what gives your schoolyard its personality. You will need a partner, a pair of scissors, and a pencil.

#### **Creating a Landscape Viewer**

Remove the sheet from the back cover of your Landscape Explorers Field Journal.



Create a frame by cutting a hole along the dotted line. You now have your own landscape viewer!

#### **Taking on a Role & Capturing a Landscape**

You and your partner will take turns playing the role of Viewer and Recorder. So choose a role, make a plan, and go out into the schoolyard!



**Viewer:** Your mission is to capture a landscape with your frame and describe it to your partner. To use the viewing frame, hold it a few inches away from your face and close one eye.



**Recorder:** Once your partner frames a view of the landscape, help them describe what they see. Your mission is to discuss the following questions with your partner, and record their observations on page 9.

- What colors and shapes do you see?
- What parts of the landscape were created by humans?
- What lives in this landscape?
- How does this landscape make you feel?  
*Calm? Happy? Grumpy?*
- Give this landscape a name.

Now, ask your partner to find another view by moving the frame. Help them find a view that has a different feeling. Discuss the same questions, and record their observations on page 10. Give the completed data sheets to your partner.

**Switching Roles** Now, switch roles and go to a different area. Repeat the steps and record the observations on pages 9 & 10 in the field journal.



## Landscape #1

➤ What colors and shapes do you see?

.....

.....

➤ What parts of the landscape were created by humans?

.....

➤ What lives in this landscape?

.....

➤ How does this landscape make you feel?

.....

.....

➤ Give this landscape a name.

.....



## Landscape #2

➤ What colors and shapes do you see?

.....

.....

➤ What parts of the landscape were created by humans?

.....

➤ What lives in this landscape?

.....

➤ How does this landscape make you feel?

.....

.....

➤ Give this landscape a name.

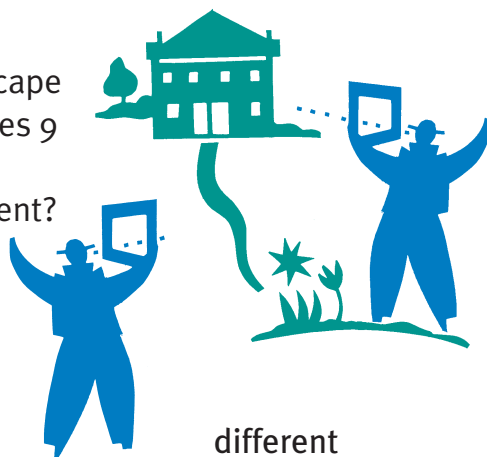
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## Schoolyard Landscape Exploration

### ..... Comparing Landscapes

Compare your landscape observations on pages 9 and 10. What is the same? What is different?



the same

different

.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....

### Thinking about Landscapes

Which view do you like the best? Why?

.....

.....

.....

## choolyard History Exploration

Every landscape contains stories about people and the past. By exploring a landscape, you can find out how people have used, valued, and changed the landscape over time. This activity challenges you to uncover some of the stories hidden in your schoolyard. Your mission is to find clues that help explain how people have used and changed the schoolyard landscape over time. The skills you use will prepare you for your Arboretum adventure. Make sure to do this activity with a partner.



*To learn more about the history of your schoolyard, try the following:*

**1. Look for physical evidence.** Can you find a date on the school building that tells you when it was built? Are some parts of the building newer than others? How do you know? Are there any trees? If so, do they look old or young? Why do you think someone planted them? Look for other clues that will help discover how people have changed the landscape. Record your observations on page 14.



**2. Look at photos.** Go to the school library or front office to find an old photo of the schoolyard. Compare the photo to the schoolyard today. What is the same? What is different? What is the date of the photo? Record your discoveries on page 14.

**3. Talk with a longtime friend of the schoolyard.** Your teacher has invited someone who knows the schoolyard well to speak with your class. Find out what they know about changes to your schoolyard. Ask them the questions on the Interview Card on page 15. Record your findings on a sheet of paper.

**4. Review the findings.** What have you discovered about your schoolyard landscape? What has changed? What is the same? What role have people played in changing the landscape?



	I looked at...	I discovered...
Physical Evidence		
Photo	date of photo: → → →	







- 1.** When did you first see the schoolyard?
- 2.** What did the landscape look like then?
- 3.** How has the landscape changed since then?
- 4.** What memories do you have of this place?
- 5.** How does the landscape make you feel today?

Why?

All landscapes include plants, animals, and other natural systems. Think about your schoolyard. How many different things do you think live there? Do some parts of the schoolyard have a greater variety of living things than others? This activity will help you uncover what's alive in your schoolyard! Your mission is to discover what lives and grows in your schoolyard, and record your findings using field notes. The skills you use will prepare you for your Arboretum adventure. The discoveries you make will give you a better sense of what makes up the schoolyard landscape.

To do this activity, you will need this field journal, a magnifying glass, two pieces of 10-foot-long string, paper, and a pencil.



**1. Select two study sites.** Look around the schoolyard for the places where you think you'll find the *greatest* and *least* variety of living things. In each place, use string to outline a study site.

**2. Observe and record your findings at two study sites.** Go to Study Site #1. Look for insects, birds, and other animals. Find each kind of plant, including trees and shrubs. Make up a name that describes each of the living things you see. Record the names and number of each living thing you find in the chart on page 18. On a separate sheet of paper draw a picture of the most common plant. Repeat these steps at Study Site #2. Record your findings on page 19.

**3. Share your discoveries.** Compare your discoveries with your classmates. What similar things did your classmates find? What was different? What part of the schoolyard has the greatest variety of plants and animals? What animals did you discover? How many different things live in your schoolyard? Imagine the landscape had no living things. How would the look and feel of the landscape change?

**4. Talk with a longtime friend of the schoolyard.** Your teacher has invited someone who knows the schoolyard well to speak with your class. Find out what the schoolyard looked like the year you were born. Ask the guest what lived and grew in the schoolyard in the past. If possible, see if they can bring an old photo.



## How Many Different Living Things Did You Find?

## Field Notes from Schoolyard Study Site #1



Your name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

Location \_\_\_\_\_ Weather \_\_\_\_\_

Name	Number
Plants	15
Animals	15
Other	15

# How Many Different Living Things Did You Find?

## Field Notes from Schoolyard Study Site #2



Your name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

Location \_\_\_\_\_ Weather \_\_\_\_\_

	Name	Number
Plants		
Animals		
Other		

Artists capture landscapes through things they create, like drawings and paintings. What they make is based on what they see and how they feel about a place. This activity challenges you to become a schoolyard landscape artist. To do this, you will need to pick a view of the landscape and study it carefully. Once you get a sense of what is there, try capturing it on paper! The skills you use will prepare you for your Arboretum adventure. The drawing you create will help others see the schoolyard landscape in a new way. Do steps 1 and 2 with a partner.



*To capture a view of your schoolyard, try the following:*

- 1. Frame a view.** Follow directions for making a landscape viewer on page 7. Hold the frame a few inches from your face and find a view that you want to draw. To remember the view, find four features in the landscape that form the four corners of the frame.
- 2. Describe shapes and colors.** Before you draw, work with your partner to identify the colors and shapes in the view. What shapes do you see? What colors? Which colors do you see most often? What is closest to you? What is furthest from you? Record your observations on page 22.
- 3. Draw the view.** On a separate sheet of paper, draw your view using colored pencils or markers. When you are done, give your drawing a name and write the date that you created it.
- 4. Record your feelings.** On the back of your landscape drawing, write several sentences to describe what you drew. Include what you liked and didn't like about the view.
- 5. Talk with a longtime friend of the schoolyard.** Your teacher has invited someone who knows the schoolyard well to speak with your class. Ask the guest what shapes and colors they imagine when they think of the schoolyard. Are any of those shapes and colors in your landscape drawing? How does the landscape make them feel?



➤ What shapes are in the view?

.....

.....

➤ What colors are in the view?

.....

.....

➤ Which colors do you see most often?

.....

➤ What is closest to you?

.....

➤ What is furthest from you?

.....





## Getting Ready for Your Arboretum Adventure

A big part of your Landscape Exploration takes place outdoors at the Arnold Arboretum. The Arboretum is like a big tree museum. It is over 100 years old. People go to the Arboretum to study trees and enjoy nature. It is in the middle of the city, but when you walk through it, you almost forget where you are. It is filled with trees, hills, valleys, and views of the Blue Hills and the Boston skyline.

During your Arboretum adventure, you will be part of a team that has a specific mission. Each team will explore something unique in the Arboretum landscape. We hope that the discoveries you make will help you to think about landscapes in a new way.

**To find out about your exploration and mission, turn the page...**



**T**his is the mission for each type of explorer.

Which one are you?

### Historian...



Your mission is to find the site of the old Bussey mansion and draw a map that shows what the area might have looked like when the Bussey family lived there 150 years ago.

### Naturalist...



Your mission is to uncover some of the mysteries of Hemlock Forest and make a record of what grows and lives there today.

### Artist...



Your mission is to capture the magic and beauty of the Arnold Arboretum through a one-of-a-kind landscape mural.

*Look at the Landscape Explorers Map of the Arnold Arboretum at the back of your Field Journal to learn more about where your adventure takes place.*

Dear Students,

*We are glad that you are coming to the Arnold Arboretum during your landscape explorations. The Arboretum is a beautiful landscape and a tree museum all in one. Most of the trees have tags that show their name and homeland. We keep a record of each tree's history. Visitors and scientists come here from all over the world to study the trees. Welcome!*

*You will visit some remarkable tree collections while you are here. Are you ready to meet the Tortured Beech tree? Will you be surprised if you find yourself standing next to a 300-year-old Hemlock tree? Can you imagine a Spruce tree so huge that you can disappear beneath its branches? There is a lot to discover at the Arboretum!*

*Here is some advice. You will be outdoors exploring with your classmates for three hours. Be sure to wear comfortable and warm outdoor clothes. Wear tough hiking shoes or sneakers for trail walking.*

*Remember these two rules. At the Arboretum, just as in other city parks, you should not pick anything off the living plants. Also, sad to say, no tree climbing. Please help us protect our tree museum!*

*We hope you will enjoy your Arboretum adventure. As you will soon discover, there is more to landscape than meets the eye. We hope you are ready!*



Liza Stearns  
Olmsted National Historic Site  
National Park Service  
Education Specialist



Diane Syverson  
Arnold Arboretum  
of Harvard University  
Educator

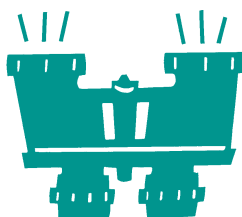
## Designing Your Schoolyard Landscape

Now that you've explored landscapes at your school and at the Arnold Arboretum, you are ready to try designing a landscape of your own. This activity asks you to design a section of your schoolyard so that it meets the needs of the students who use it. Use your imagination to come up with a creative and exciting plan that makes your section of the schoolyard the best it can be! *Do this activity with three or four other people. You will need pencil, paper, mural paper, and markers or colored pencils.*

### **Finding a Landscape for Your Project**

As a group, decide which part of the schoolyard landscape you'd like to re-design. Go to this spot and look around. Your answers to the following questions will help you decide what to change and what to keep the same:

- Who uses this area?
- What do they do here?
- What do people like about this part of the schoolyard?
- What don't they like?



## Considering What to Put in Your Landscape

Schoolyards can have lots of different things in them. What would you like in your schoolyard? Use your responses to the questions on page 26 to think about what features to include in your section of the schoolyard. Brainstorm a list of features that you think will make your area fun, interesting, and useful. Here are some suggestions to get you started:

- 👂 a place to talk with your friends    👂 a shady spot
- 👂 a place to jump rope    👂 a sunny spot
- 👂 a place to play basketball    👂 a place to grow & study plants
- 👂 a quiet place to read or draw    👂 a hill that offers different views
- 👂 a place to park cars    👂 a place with trees & bird feeders

## Planning Your Landscape Design

Now, imagine that you have the power to make your section of the schoolyard landscape the best it can be. What will you do? Design your landscape using some of the features from your list or the one above. Use the chart on page 28 to list each of the features you will include in your landscape, who will use the feature, and how it will add to the look and feel of the schoolyard.

**Drawing Your Landscape Design**

As a group, use a large piece of mural paper and colored pencils or markers to draw your landscape design. When you are done drawing, write a paragraph to describe your landscape. Include who will use it, how it will be used, and how you think the landscape will make people feel. Give your design a name.

**Looking at the Big Picture**

Now that you’ve created a mural of the ideal landscape for your part of the schoolyard, find out what the rest of your class has done. Share your landscape design with the class and see what kind of schoolyard you’d have if you put all the landscape designs together. Does it work? As a class, discuss any changes you might make to create a truly neat and wonderful schoolyard.

Feature	Users	Effect on Landscape
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		

*use more paper if necessary*

## ore Things to Read and Do

### Places to Visit

#### **Frederick Law Olmsted National Historical Site**

Frederick Law Olmsted was the country's first professional landscape architect. His company designed thousands of landscapes from coast to coast. Visit Olmsted National Historic Site to learn more about the world of landscape design. Olmsted National Historic Site is located at 99 Warren Street in Brookline.

#### **Boston's Emerald Necklace**

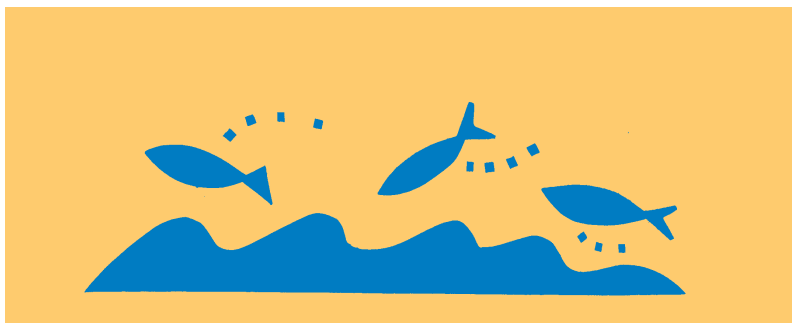
The Emerald Necklace was designed in the 1880s by landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted. His idea was to create a chain of parks, ponds, and green spaces to link different parts of the city. **Turn the page to find out about three places in the Emerald Necklace that you might like to explore.**



**Arnold Arboretum** The Arboretum is a terrific place to explore landscapes. It is a large area with hills, woods, ponds, and walking paths. From the top of Bussey Hill you can see the Blue Hills in one direction and the city in the other. The Arboretum is near the Forest Hills T Station in Jamaica Plain.

**Franklin Park** Franklin Park is the largest park in the city of Boston. The hills in the park are great for sledding and hiking. There are lots of trails to explore by bicycle. You might also want to watch ducks on the pond, or visit the animals at the Franklin Park Zoo. Franklin Park is in Roxbury.

**Fenway Community Gardens** The Fenway Community Gardens are planted and cared for by people who live around the Boston Fenway. Every garden is unique. The gardens are great to visit to see the different ways people design gardens. The Fenway Community Gardens are on the south side of the Boylston Street Bridge.







## Things to Read and Do

**If you enjoyed thinking about landscapes with us, here are some books with more ideas and information.**

*To learn about plants and animals that live among us:*

**One Small Square Backyard** by Donald M. Silver.  
Published by W.H. Freeman and Company, 1993.

*If you are interested in drawing and studying nature:*

**Nature All Year Long** by Claire Walker Leslie. Published by Greenwillow Books, 1991.

*If you want to read a story about one girl who convinced her neighborhood to turn a vacant lot into beautiful gardens, try this:*

**City Green** by DyAnne DiSalvo-Ryan. Published by William Morrow and Company, 1994.

*Try designing a city! This computer game challenges you to become a city planner. You decide where to put roads, buildings, parks, electricity, and all the other things needed in a city.*

**SimCity.** Maxis Software. Moraga, California, 1989.



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS





